

## HOW TO CAN IN THE SOUTH

Home Methods As Taught by the U. S. Department of Agriculture in the Southern States.

- \* Can Surplus Food But Use Jars and Cans Wisely.
- \* Don't have an empty preserving jar in your home next fall.
- \* Reserve regular tight-sealing containers for canning foods.
- \* Concentrate products so that each jar or can will hold as much food and as little water as possible.
- \* Put up jams, jellies and preserves in wide-necked glasses sealed with cork or paper and paraffin. Pack fruit juices in ordinary bottles.
- \* Don't can anything that can be kept just as well dried or in other forms. Dry navy and mature Lima beans for winter use.
- \* Produce in your garden lots of cabbage, potatoes, and root crops that can be kept for winter without canning.—U. S. Department of Agriculture.

It is more important than ever this year that none of the surplus products of the garden should go to waste. The country needs food now and it will need food next winter, not only for itself but for the allies. Home-canned products may never leave the house in which they are made, but their consumption at home will mean so much more food available elsewhere for those who need it. It is imperative also that the canning be done carefully as well as energetically in order to preserve the more perishable products.

In the method taught by the specialists in the U. S. Department of Agriculture to the members of the canning clubs in the South, the first step is to see that all the necessary preparations are made before the vegetables or fruit are picked. "One hour from the field to the can" is a motto that every canner should have in mind. This is impossible if one has to prepare utensils and wash and scald cans after the fruits and vegetables have been brought into the house. The condition of these is a prime factor in determining the quality of the finished product. Unless they are absolutely fresh, crisp, and clean when they are put into the cans, a high-grade article is impossible.

Preparing the product for the can. In case of tomatoes the fruits should first be graded and all defective ones rejected. They should be lowered into boiling water for one minute; then plunged into cold water and peeled promptly. A slender, pointed knife should be used to cut out the core, care being taken not to cut into the seed cells.

The next step for nearly all fruits and vegetables is blanching. This consists of plunging the product into boiling water in which it is allowed to remain for a time that varies with the state of maturity. Blanching gives a more thorough cleaning than ordinary washing, removes the strong odor and flavor from certain kinds of vegetables, improves the texture, insures a clearer liquor, shrinks the article and makes it more flexible, and in this way facilitates the putting up of a full pack. A wire basket or cheesecloth square should be used for the purpose. After blanching, spraying fruit with cold water will make it firmer and it is also sometimes desirable to put vegetables into cold water for an instant in order to

make them crisp. Legal Requirements for Selling Canned Goods.

Since the Federal laws governing the interstate shipment of food require cans to be filled as full of food as is practicable for processing, and to contain only enough liquor to fill the spaces and cover the contents, it is necessary to see that all the cans are filled to a maximum capacity. A number of containers should be weighed before and after filling in order that an accurate idea of the average net weight—in other words, the weight of the contents exclusive of the can—may be obtained. It should also be remembered that corn expands in processing to such an extent that containers filled with it can not be packed as full as with other vegetables. The cans should be marked with a pencil or knife to show the contents. The necessity for this work should be foreseen so that there may be no delay and that the filled cans do not stand for any length of time before the air is exhausted from them.

After the fruit or vegetable is in the can, brine, sirup, or water should be added to within 1-4 of an inch of the top and the can shaken gently to displace all air within it. The groove around the opening is then cleaned and wiped and the cap slipped on. In order to make sure that the contents of the can have the required weight, the container should be weighed carefully before sealing.

If the weight is satisfactory, flux should be applied carefully around the groove with a small brush or cord, or a little mop made by tying a piece of clean white cloth around the end of a small stick. Great care must be taken to see that none of the flux enters the can. The clean, hot capping steel is then applied, the cap being held in place with the center rod. As the steel is lowered it should be turned steadily until the solder flows. Hold the rod firmly and lift the steel with a sudden twist to swing the melted solder evenly around the groove.

Exhausting and Sterilizing. The next step is to exhaust the air from the cans. To do this they should be placed in trays and lowered into boiling water to within 1 inch of the top. Ordinarily 3 minutes is long enough for the cans to remain in the water, which need not be brought again to the boiling point before the cans are taken out. A temperature of 180 degrees F. is frequently sufficient for exhausting. Failure to exhaust results in the air which is left in the can expanding. This causes the can to bulge and gives the appearance of a "swell" which will not only prevent the sale of that can, but prejudices customers in future. The leaders in the government canning work insist that whatever the "4-H Brand" label is used, exhausting shall be done.

After exhausting, the small hole in the top of the can must be closed immediately. To do this apply flux as for capping and use a little wire solder to close the hole. Hold the solder with the left hand near the hole and barely touch the hot copper to it, so that only a bead will drop.

It now remains to sterilize the contents of the sealed cans. For beans, corn, peas, and asparagus intermittent processing is recommended. Under this method sterilization is carried on for one hour for three successive days. The cans are lowered slowly under water that is boiling vigorously at the time. Naturally it ceases to boil as soon as the cans are immersed but will begin to boil again a short time later. The time of processing is counted from the moment when the water begins to boil again and it must be kept boiling constantly throughout the entire hour. In the case of very young string beans and some other easily sterilized vegetables, the processing is reduced to one hour for two successive days.

As soon as the processing is over, the cans should be cooled as rapidly as possible in order to stop cooking, which breaks down the fruit and injures the flavor and color. It is well

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to plunge the cans into very cold water. They should never be stacked close together until they are entirely cold.

The labeling should be done with a rather dry paste which is put only on the end of the label so that it does not touch the tin. Paste may cause rust, and in damp climate it is sometimes customary to lacquer the outside of the can before it is labeled. The label, if the product is intended for sale, must contain the net weight in pounds and ounces and the packer's name and address.

In packing fruits and vegetables it is necessary to surround them with brine, sirup, or water, but under the terms of the Federal law governing the interstate shipment of canned goods no more of this liquor is allowed than is actually necessary to cover the contents after as full a pack as possible is made. With tomatoes no water whatever should be added and no tomato juice should be added in excess of the amount in the tomatoes canned.

Add Sugar and Salt. In addition to the liquor a mixture of sugar and salt adds greatly to the flavor of such products as tomatoes, peas, Lima beans and corn. The mixture recommended by the government specialists in canning is composed of 1-3 salt and 2-3 sugar. Two level teaspoonfuls of this are placed in a No. 3 can and one teaspoonful in a No. 2 can. For beans, okra, cauliflower, etc., a brine containing 2 1-2 ounces of salt to a gallon of water is used. For asparagus a heavier brine, 4 ounces to a gallon of water, is needed.

In order to conserve the supply of tin cans it is strongly urged that all products intended for home use



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should be put up, whenever possible, in glass. The hermetic type of jar, however, is not a suitable one for intermittent processing for which the best type is a glass-top jar with wire clamps. The clamps should be raised at the beginning of each processing to allow for expansion.

TO SUCCEED R. M. McCOWN

James H. Thornwell Will be Assistant Secretary of State.

Columbia, S. C.—James H. Thornwell, for the past fourteen years superintendent of the Mount Zion Institute, of Winnsboro, son and grandson of two well known South Carolinians who bore the same name, will succeed R. M. McCown as assistant Secretary of State on July 1, Mr. McCown, who was appointed temporarily, having resigned.

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## VERY IMPORTANT.

The available supplies of foodstuffs are the lowest in all food-producing countries that they have been for over fifty years.

Prices of most foodstuffs have about doubled during the past two or three years.

The government crop report forecasts a wheat crop which will be short of American consumption.

The reserve supplies of meats are far below normal.

A nation at war requires more food than a nation at peace.

France, England, Belgium and Italy are short of food and are largely dependent on American imports, and, unless some means is found of supplying them, they can not continue to fight effectively.

The South is importing from the West and North \$600,000,000 to \$700,000,000 worth of foodstuffs annually and is thus a tremendous drain on the nation's food resources and, consequently, is now a menace to the nation's safety.

A pound of cotton at 20c will actually buy less foodstuffs now than normally.

We must raise what we eat.

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